NOVA SCOTIA Government of Nova Scotia

# Library Funding Report Released

**Department of Education and Culture (to July 99)**
**May 2, 1998 13:37**

As access to information becomes more important, public libraries are increasingly valued as community resources. A new funding report, now being considered by government, supports this vision and strategic direction for public libraries, while building on the principles of equity and stability within a funding formula introduced three years ago.

The report is being released today at the Library Boards Association of Nova Scotia's annual meeting in Yarmouth.

Sharing Resources in Nova Scotia -- a report of the Regional Public Libraries Funding Review Committee --contains 12 recommendations. One recommendation is to link funding with standards of service that meet the needs of Nova Scotians.

Education and Culture Minister Robbie Harrison welcomes the report. "The report supports a vision of where our libraries need to go and how to get there -- at a time when more Nova Scotians are turning to their libraries to support education, community development and lifelong learning."

Mr. Harrison said a recent survey shows Nova Scotians highly value their libraries. "About 98 per cent of people surveyed describe public libraries as essential or very important. We need to fund them adequately so they can do their job."

The report recommends adequate funding so all libraries meet expected standards for core services. The province, municipalities and library boards are asked to increase funding by approximately $3 million, phased in over three years. Libraries would also develop performance measures to track progress and build accountability as they work to improve service in their communities.

As part of the $3 million, additional funding is recommended for the Halifax Regional Library. This would help Halifax maintain and build its collections, resources and expertise -- to be shared with libraries across the province that otherwise could not afford them. Supplementary funding is requested to assist the Eastern Counties Regional Library, which serves a small, rural population within a large area.

The recommended funding formula also recognizes additional costs for providing bilingual services in Acadian and francophone communities. Library boards are expected to continue fund-raising, but at a reduced level, to enable them to focus on providing core services.

The 10-member committee that prepared the report included library board, municipal and government representatives. Mr. Harrison thanked the committee members --and the many people they

consulted --for such an informative and innovative report.
"Our libraries and municipalities deserve our appreciation for bringing good ideas to the table. The report is an excellent example of how we can all work together to strengthen our libraries, which are so important to the people they serve."

Mr. Harrison said decisions on the funding recommendations will be communicated as part of the provincial budget process.

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NOTE: The following is intended for broadcast media.

A review committee says libraries in Nova Scotia need

more funding to meet core standards.

The report was released today at the annual meeting of

the Library Boards Association of Nova Scotia. The

meeting was held in Yarmouth.

The report calls for the province, municipalities and

library boards to increase funding by about three-million-

dollars over three years.

Education minister Robbie Harrison welcomed the

report and says decisions on the funding recommendations

will be part of the budget process.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: A detailed report on new standards, also based on consultation and consensus, is available from the Provincial Library, 902-424-2457.

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